

## Holiday Message from Lieutenant General Roger C. Schultz December 15, 2003



Lieutenant General  
Roger C. Schultz  
Director, ARNG

As the holiday season approaches, service members from across our country remain on duty around the world preserving our nation's freedom and security.

As American families come together to celebrate this holiday season, welcome in the New Year, and treasure the joys of life and family let us remember that the many blessings that we enjoy today are the direct result of your personal dedication, sacrifice and hard work to defend our homeland and preserve the values that make America unique.

Men and woman of today's National Guard willingly continue to shoulder the heavy burden of protecting our nation's freedom. Our nation called and we sent our nation's best. Many of you will remain on duty throughout the holidays in the United States and abroad conducting operations and guarding our freedom. Your dedication and personal sacrifice continue to preserve liberty and uphold the legacy of our forefathers. Each and every day, you symbolize the true meaning of the citizen-soldier.

National Guard members have endured many holiday seasons in conflict overseas-in two World Wars, Korea, Vietnam, the Persian Gulf and last year in Afghanistan. This year is no different. The holiday time brings no respite for our citizen-soldiers engaged in the War on Terrorism. In addition, Guard Soldiers have been keeping peace in the Balkans and in the Pacific, serving selflessly in so many places away from home. This also means that there is little relief for our families-they continue to set aside their interests in support of our service.

The character and courage of our citizen-soldiers inspires me. I am extremely proud to serve with you. I recognize your self-less service and recognize that your devotion to duty makes you a source of inspiration for all to emulate. Guard Soldiers fight fiercely and exhibit a warrior spirit. Our nation could not ask for more than what our Guard Soldiers are providing this year. You are our hero's because you repeatedly triumph over diversity. You are America's citizen-soldiers, your honor and respect to duty defines our National Guard. You know what it is like to stand guard in the chill of the night while other's sleep. You understand the meaning of hardship; standing watch at freedom's frontier far from loved one's. You have seen the horror of war and catastrophe. You endure it; it is this devotion to duty that gives us strength. Looking out on the world today, we can see how you continue the great courage of veterans from bygone eras.

We must remember that families also have paid the price for freedom. It is not easy for anyone to be far from home during the holidays, no matter how critical the mission. To those stationed here at home, and the many stationed in far away places across the globe, may the joy of the holidays shine in your hearts, brighter than ever before.

On behalf of Barbara and I, thank you for your service and the difficult sacrifices of your families. You will have a special place in our hearts and prayers this season. We wish you a happy, healthy and safe holiday season and a New Year filled with hope and peace.

Roger C. Schultz  
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Director, Army National Guard